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OF
The Theological Seminary
OF THE
Synods of South Carolina
Georgia, Alabama and
Florida

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FORE WORD

Our last *Bulletin* gave some matters that were of special interest for the Synod of Georgia. This *Bulletin* contains some matter that is of special interest to the Synod of Alabama. But any matter that is of interest to either of these synods is of interest to the entire constituency of Columbia Seminary. For, as we stated in a former *Bulletin*, these synods constitute a natural group of churches and whatever promotes the welfare of one of them will directly or indirectly promote the welfare of all the others.

A BRIGHTENING OUTLOOK

A New Enclosure For Seminary Grounds.

The old plank fence that has so long disfigured the Seminary grounds is at last to be removed. It will be replaced by a handsome brick, stone and iron structure that will make the Seminary property an ornament to the city. The money for this enclosure has come from the city of Columbia itself. It was given with cordial good-will and is but an earnest of what the city will do for the Seminary in the days to come.

A Financial Agent for the Seminary.

It will be gratifying news to the constituency of the Seminary that the Executive Committee have taken steps to secure a Financial Agent. There is every reason to expect that the man of their choice will be secured. His name, when announced, will in a large measure guarantee the success of the canvass that he is expected to organize and push. The object of this canvass, of course, will be to raise the one hundred thousand dollars contemplated in the action of the four synods. It is hoped that the agent will begin his canvass in the city of Columbia and complete the raising of the fifteen thousand dollars that will be needed for the new enclosure and chapel. The fifteen thousand dollars from Columbia ought easily to mean thirty-five thousand dollars additional from the Synod of South Carolina; and fifty thousand dollars from the Synod of South Carolina ought to mean an equal sum from the Synods of Georgia, Alabama and Florida combined. One hundred thousand dollars will give us some much-needed buildings and the endowment for the chair of English Bible and Pastoral Theology. It is hoped that everyone in the four synods, preachers and people alike, will contribute toward making this effort a success.

The Candidates Are Available.

There are enough candidates in the four synods who will be entering some seminary next fall to raise the enrollment at Columbia to something like what it has been in times past. With the synods undertaking seriously and with enthusiasm to build up the material equipment of the institution, it is confidently expected that each presbytery will direct its candidates to their own seminary. If history repeats itself—and there is every reason to believe that it will—the presbyteries, by pursuing such a course, will be the beneficiaries of their own wisdom. In other words, if they send their candidates to Columbia for their theological training, Columbia will send them back ministers for their vacant churches and home mission fields.

An Erroneous Impression.

The impression seems to have gotten abroad that Columbia Seminary has all the funds that it needs in order to accomplish effectively the ends for which it exists. How such an impression ever became current, one is at a loss to understand. The fact is, that Columbia Seminary has less endowment than any of her sister institutions in our Church, except the newly established school at Austin, Texas. We sorely need a fire-proof library building and a chapel that will at least be respectable and not a reproach to the Presbyterian name. In addition to this, we need the endowment for a chair of English Bible and Pastoral Theology. Our Student Fund Endowment also needs to be at least doubled—that is, if our student body is to be increased. We need additional endowment for our library and for our current expense fund. None of these needs are fictitious. The increased equipment is needed, not merely to put us upon a footing of efficiency equal to that of our sister seminaries, but, wholly apart from this, in order to enable Columbia Seminary effectively to serve the four synods of South Carolina, Georgia, Alabama and Florida.

AN ACTION THAT PROMISES LARGE BENEFIT TO THE SEMINARY

At its meeting in October last the Synod of South Carolina sent to the Synod of Georgia a communication inviting its cooperation and that of the other associated synods* in an effort to improve the equipment of the seminary. Omitting introductory matter the proposal of the Synod of South Carolina was as follows:

"Brethren, let us arise and build. No one can doubt that if we will only agree to see in the Seminary our common responsibility and our common blessing, we, the four synods of South Carolina, Georgia, Alabama and Florida, can, by God's blessing, make this institution, which at times has threatened to become our reproach, our glory. It is ours. Let us care for it, and make it worthy of ourselves. It has been a mighty blessing in the past—is still a great blessing. Let us make it an even more potent agency for building up the Redeemer's kingdom in the days to come. Our sister synods in Virginia and North Carolina, in Kentucky and Missouri, and in Texas, are all engaged in bettering the equipment and increasing the efficiency of their respective seminaries. Shall we permit ours to languish? We have the means to make it the equal in equipment of any. We have the candidates to build up its student body. Our own churches will be the first, the largest, and the most lasting beneficiaries of our liberality and activity. Let us, then, arise and build.

It will require \$100,000 to put the Seminary upon a footing of permanent efficiency. This Synod will make the effort to raise \$50,000 of said sum. Will not your venerable body do the same to raise \$30,000, or such other sum as in your judgment will be your equitable proportion of the whole amount named? We are making similar overtures to the Synods of Alabama and Florida.

*It was understood that a copy of the foregoing communication, with necessary explanations, would be sent also to the Synods of Alabama and Florida. By some oversight it seems that this was not done.

Praying for you grace, mercy and peace from God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, we subscribe ourselves, through our Moderator and Clerk,

Your brethren in Christ,

(Signed) HENRY ALEXANDER WHITE,
THOS. H. LAW, Stated Clerk. Moderator."

RESPONSE OF THE SYNOD OF GEORGIA

To the communication from South Carolina given above, the Synod of Georgia, in session at Athens, through its Committee on the Theological Seminary, made the following cordial response:

"Your Committee on Theological Seminary would report that communications from the Synods of South Carolina and Virginia, and the report of the Board of Directors of Columbia Seminary, together with the minutes of the Board, have been placed in our hands.

From the report of the Board of Directors, it appears that the Seminary is in an encouraging condition, with great possibilities for the future. The spirit of both faculty and students is admirable. The attendance is larger than in many past years. The Seminary seems on the eve of the most useful work in its history.

Your committee would, therefore, recommend: (1) That the Synod congratulates the Seminary on the substantial character of the work it is doing and the bright prospects before it for the future. Synod is especially gratified at the harmony and sympathy existing between the Board of Directors, the students and the faculty.

2. In answer to the courteous communication of the Synod of South Carolina, asking this Synod to cooperate in raising \$100,000 for the material betterment and enlarging the faculty of the Seminary, Synod answers that it will heartily cooperate with the controlling synods in raising this fund, and urges its pastors and churches to give aid and encouragement to this worthy movement.

3. That Synod exhorts the Board of Directors, in conjunction with the faculty, to make such improvements in the curriculum of the Seminary as will be calculated to meet more fully the needs of the Church of the day.

4. That in answer to the communication of the Synod of Virginia relative to greater economy in the use of means and men in theological education, Synod answers that inasmuch as the Synods of South Carolina and Tennessee are not in sympathy with the scheme proposed, we do not deem it wise to enter upon even a threatened agitation, the result of which cannot but be harmful to Columbia Seminary just at this time.

(Signed) D. W. BRANNEN, Chairman."

ACTION OF THE SYNOD OF ALABAMA

The Synod of Georgia not only took the foregoing action, but sent Rev. Dr. R. C. Reed as a special commissioner to the Synod of Alabama to bring to the attention of that body the communication from the Synod of South Carolina and its response. As a result the Synod of Alabama, through its Committee on the Theological Seminary, took action as follows:

Report on Columbia Theological Seminary.

"Your Committee begs leave to report:

1. That we have considered the communication from the Board of the Seminary covering the year which closed May, 1908, and are much gratified to note the encouraging condition of the Seminary affairs. The endowment is all safely invested, and yields a revenue sufficient for the present needs; the attendance has been steadily increasing, and is, we learn, larger this year than for many years past; and there is a most gratifying state of feeling among the students, professors and members of the Board.

We are glad to learn that a movement has been set on foot to raise the sum of \$100,000 to be added to the

permanent endowment for the purpose of securing another professor and otherwise improving the facilities of this school of the prophets. We learn that the Synod of South Carolina proposes to raise \$50,000 of this sum, and the Synod of Georgia \$30,000, leaving \$20,000 to be raised by the Synods of Alabama and Florida. Your Committee respectfully suggests that this Synod agree to do what it can to raise at least \$12,500, leaving \$7,500 to be raised by the Synod of Florida, and we ask that this Synod shall record its hearty approval of this effort, and urge all our ministers and church sessions to lend all possible aid to the undertaking by cooperating with the representatives of the Seminary who may come into their respective churches soliciting subscriptions.

2. We recommend that Rev. Dr. Wm. E. McIlwain be now elected a member of the Board of Directors for the ensuing three years to take the place of Rev. Dr. A. A. Little, who has removed from our bounds.

(Signed) NEANDER M. WOODS, Chairman."

The report was adopted.

WAS IT A WISE ACTION?

In 1857 the Synod of Alabama entered into partnership with the Synods of South Carolina, Georgia and Florida in the ownership and control of Columbia Seminary. This was not because there were no other seminaries at that time able and willing to educate the Synod's candidates for the ministry. Princeton, N. J., Union, Va., Danville, Ky., were all ably manned and had ample accommodations for all the students that Alabama could send them. Railroad facilities were such as to make these institutions easily accessible. Why, then, did the Synod of Alabama establish intimate and responsible relations with the Seminary in Columbia, S. C.? Obviously the Synod believed that an advantage would accrue to her by this step. In other words, the Synod of Alabama believed that she could serve

the interests of Christ's Kingdom in her own bounds better by sending her candidates to Columbia than to another seminary. Without pausing to ask why the Synod entertained this belief, or whether there was any rational ground for such a belief, we raise the question, have results justified the belief? If we take a segment of history embracing sixteen years, this will serve as a fair and trustworthy test of results. If we take Union Seminary, Virginia, for comparison with Columbia, that will also make the test a fair one. Here, then, are the results: During the sixteen years from 1889 to 1905, three hundred and ten men graduated from Union Seminary. Of these, only two on leaving the seminary settled in Alabama. During this same period, one hundred and twenty-five men graduated from Columbia Seminary. Of these eleven on leaving the Seminary settled in Alabama. At this rate, if Columbia had been as prosperous, *i. e.*, if she had graduated as many men as Union, instead of furnishing two, she would have furnished twenty-seven men to the Synod of Alabama.

Tested From Another Point of View.

It may be suggested that the reason of the difference is to be found in the fact that more students went from the Synod of Alabama to Columbia than to Union, and therefore more came back from Columbia than from Union. The reply to this suggestion is that the fact is just the opposite. During the sixteen years under consideration, twelve students from the Synod of Alabama graduated at Union, of whom only one returned, and he gave to the Synod just one and one-half years of labor. During the same period, seven students from the Synod of Alabama graduated at Columbia, of whom six returned to Alabama, and in the aggregate gave to the Synod sixty years of labor. To state the matter a little differently, the Synod of Alabama sent twelve candidates to Union Seminary in Virginia to be trained for the ministry and the Synod received in

return eighteen months of ministerial labor. The Synod sent seven candidates to Columbia Seminary to be trained and received in return sixty years of ministerial labor. This would seem to be a mathematical demonstration that if the Synod of Alabama wishes to have the benefit of the labor of her candidates in after years she had better send them to Columbia Seminary rather than to Union.

And From Yet Another.

Perhaps it would be just as well, however, for the Synod of Alabama to educate her candidates in Kentucky. Here again we can apply the test of results. Take the segment of eleven years between 1894 and 1905. During this time ten candidates from the Synod of Alabama received their training in Kentucky. Of these only two came back to the Synod. One of these remained one year and the other two years. Of the thirty-four years of ministerial labor performed by these ten young men, the Synod of Alabama has had the benefit of only three years. Is not this a mathematical demonstration that if the Synod of Alabama wishes to have her own students return to and labor in her bounds after their graduation, she will do better to send them to Columbia than to send them to Kentucky?

Conclusion.

Evidently the fathers, who in 1857 accepted for the Synod of Alabama the position of joint ownership and control in Columbia Seminary, did so for the reason that they wished to retain as many of the students as possible after their graduation for work within the bounds of the Synod. They believed the way to do this was to send them to Columbia. Have not the results abundantly justified their belief?

Columbia Seminary was founded especially to serve the territory covered by the four controlling Synods. It continues to exist especially to serve this territory. It regards

this territory as its own. It rightly regards this territory as its own, just as the child rightly regards the father who begat him and who nourished him through infancy and childhood as his own.

The Seminary is making an effort to secure all the students from this territory. It is certainly entitled to them if it can show, as it assuredly can show, that it is to the interest of the Synods to send their candidates here. The doors of the Seminary are open to students from all quarters, and they are gladly welcomed, but the Seminary is disposed to urge a claim for the students of its own territory. It needs them, and the Synods need to send them here.

